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Draft area programme document**

Palestinian children and women in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Summary

The Executive Director presents the draft area programme document for Palestinian children and women for discussion and comments. The Executive Board is requested to approve the aggregate indicative budget of $3,200,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $9,230,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2004 to 2005.

* E/ICEF/2003/10.

** In accordance with Executive Board decision 2002/4 (E/ICEF/2002/8), the present document will be revised and posted on the UNICEF Extranet in October 2003, together with the summary results matrix. It will then be approved by the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2004.

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Basic data
(2001 unless otherwise stated)

	Occupied Palestinian Territory	*Palestinians living in Jordan*	*Palestinians living in Lebanon*	*Palestinians living in the Syrian Arab Republic*
Child population (millions, under 18 years)	1.7	0.65	0.18	0.15
U5MR (per 1,000 live births)	27	35[a]	49[b]	42[b]
Underweight (%, moderate and severe)	4[c]	4[d]	4[b]	8[b]
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)	-	41[d,e]	170[f]	75[g]
Primary school enrolment and/or attendance (% net, male/female)	93/94[b]	93/94[d,h]	96/97[b]	98/98[b]
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (%)	99[b]	98[d,i]	86[b]	94[b]
Use of improved drinking water sources (%)	94[b]	94[d,a]	70[b]	78[b]
Adult HIV prevalence rate (%)	..	<0.1[d]	..	..
Child work (%, 5-14 year-olds)	17[b]	..	..	18[d]
GNI per capita (US$)	1 350	1 750[d]	4 010[d,j]	1 000[d]
One-year-olds immunized against DPT3 (%)	89[b]	99	99	77[b]
One-year-olds immunized against measles (%)	93[b]	98	99	74[b]

[a] 1997.
[b] 2000.
[c] 2002.
[d] Denotes data for host country population, i.e., not specifically for the Palestinian population.
[e] 1995-1996.
[f] 1997-2000.
[g] 1990-2002.
[h] 1999.
[i] 1998.
[j] According to 1996 UNRWA data, GNP per capita of $880.

The situation of Palestinian children and women

1. Approximately 2.7 million Palestinian children live in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Most of them remain vulnerable to the unstable political and economical situation in the region, particularly the ongoing conflict in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. It is important to note that most figures concerning the Occupied Palestinian Territory date from before the beginning of the second Intifada in September 2000, and thus do not reflect the effects of the conflict.

2. In Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, only a portion of the Palestinian refugee populations live in official camps run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and thus qualify for direct assistance. Each country takes a different position with regard to rights to citizenship and the right to employment. A large proportion of the refugee population continues to live in poverty.

3. Of the 3.3 million inhabitants of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2.2 million live in the West Bank and 1.1 million in Gaza. A total of 1.3 million are registered as refugees. At 3.6 per cent, the annual population growth is high and as a

consequence, the population below 18 years of age is 1.7 million. The economy has sharply deteriorated since September 2000. As a direct result of the closures and curfews, unemployment had increased to 50 per cent by mid-2002, leaving around 60 per cent of the population in poverty, more than double the figure for 1998. In parallel, the Palestinian Authority is facing a fiscal crisis, which further affects its efforts to maintain access to basic services.

4. ***Survival***. Significant progress was made during the 1990s in the area of service delivery to children. The under-five mortality rates for Palestinian children are estimated to be 49 per 1,000 live births in Lebanon, 42 in the Syrian Arab Republic, 35 in Jordan and 27 in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The leading causes of infant deaths are low birth weight, premature birth and congenital malformations. Maternal mortality ratios, which range from 170 per 100,000 live births among Palestinians in Lebanon to 41 in Jordan, indicate about 200 maternal deaths per year among the Palestinian population as a whole. Complications and accidents during delivery also contribute to infant deaths in the Syrian Arab Republic, where the percentage of births attended by trained health workers is lower.

5. Immunization coverage rates have remained above 90 per cent for Palestinian children living in Jordan and Lebanon for some years. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the rate is below 80 per cent and in the Occupied Palestinian Territory it is believed to have fallen below 90 per cent over the last two years, as a result of impeded access.

6. Malnutrition rates remain low, and the nutritional status of children in the Occupied Palestinian Territory has deteriorated recently. A survey in 2002 showed increasing levels of anaemia among children. Rates of consumption of iodized salt are high in Jordan and Lebanon, but still below 40 per cent in the Syrian Arab Republic and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, where a high level of goitre prevalence (15 per cent) has been observed among primary-school students. There are fairly low levels of exclusive breastfeeding of children aged 0-3 months: 29 per cent in the Occupied Palestinian Territory; 22 per cent in the Syrian Arab Republic; and as low as 10 per cent among Palestinian children living in Lebanon.

7. No representative data exist on HIV/AIDS prevalence in the four Palestinian populations and the number of recorded cases remains low. However, there is a strong need for raising awareness of the disease. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, for example, only 50 per cent of women know about mother-to-child transmission of HIV, 34 per cent know how HIV/AIDS is prevented and 21 per cent know where they can be tested for HIV.

8. ***Development***. The net primary-school-enrolment rate is above 90 per cent in all four populations, with no significant gender or geographical disparities. However, girls can face difficulties in their development, such as mobility restrictions for cultural reasons and absence of safe play areas. In Lebanon, 86 per cent of Palestinian children reach grade 5, which indicates a slightly higher drop-out rate than in the other three populations.

9. Due to frequent consanguineous marriages among Palestinian refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic, sickle-cell anaemia is a serious health risk. In 1997, prevalence among carriers below 15 years of age was 26 per cent and as a result, child disability is probably relatively high, although more detailed studies are needed.

10. ***Protection***. Since the beginning of the Intifada in September 2000, more than 475 children have been killed, of whom 394 were Palestinians. More than 8,000 children have been injured, many suffering permanent disabilities. In 2001, 75 per cent of Palestinian adults living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory believed that their children were experiencing increasing emotional problems. Physical and verbal violence in schools are said not to be uncommon in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and in Palestinian schools in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Girls' adolescences are often compromised by demands for domestic tasks or for early marriage. Some 13 per cent of all 18-year-old girls in the Occupied Palestinian Territory already have a child or are pregnant.

11. ***Participation***. Young people are not encouraged by traditional family settings to develop their own views and they have few safe and appropriate spaces to congregate outside school. This leaves them with few opportunities to use their free time to develop their skills and personalities. In a context of conflict, when normal support structures may be weakened, opportunities for participation by young people in constructive activities become even more important. Such activities can reduce the likelihood that young people will engage in risky behaviour, including exposure to police and military violence.

Key results and lessons learned from previous cooperation, 2001-2003

Key results achieved

12. The previous programme of cooperation documented the impact of the conflict on children, and advocated that all parties respect children's rights. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the effects of the conflict on children have been devastating, both socially and psychologically. In response, psychosocial interventions included in various projects have proven to be very beneficial to children and also to achieving the wider aims of the original projects. UNICEF and a broad coalition of partners supported the development of a code of conduct for psychosocial interventions. UNICEF also supported training of school counsellors, kindergarten and nursery teachers, social workers and support groups for children. A peer counselling project that specifically targeted adolescents was piloted in 60 schools during 2001 through local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In Jenin and in the five districts of Gaza, psychosocial teams were set up and weekly recreational activities for over 5,000 children were promoted in the areas most exposed to increasing levels of violence. In partnership with Palestinian NGOs, free legal aid to Palestinian children detained in Israeli prisons was ensured and clothes and items for personal hygiene were provided.

13. Despite many difficulties due to military closure of towns, high immunization coverage rates were maintained through both a routine immunization programme and polio "mop-up" campaigns in remote and difficult-to-reach areas. Nationally, 100,000 first-grade students received a booster dose of oral polio vaccine. A subnational polio campaign reached 200,000 children under five years of age. UNICEF and UNRWA assisted the Ministry of Health both with polio campaigns and routine immunization against the other diseases of the expanded programme on immunization (EPI) of more than 45,000 children, located mainly in remote and inaccessible areas of Hebron, Ramallah and Bethlehem.

14. The programme supported advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns for breastfeeding, consumption of iodized salt and prevention of iron deficiency anaemia. Almost 3,000 kindergarten teachers received training in childhood development and 230 kindergartens and 60 nurseries in the Occupied Palestinian Territory were provided with furniture, educational toys and indoor and outdoor games. In Jordan, the programme supported training of staff of UNRWA health centres, provision of essential health equipment and education of over 5,500 parents, more than one third of them fathers, in early childhood care.

15. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the programme helped to improve overall living conditions. Health and family surveys were conducted by volunteers from the camps, and training was given in planning, literacy and community-based rehabilitation for the disabled. Water and sewerage systems in the camps were also improved.

16. In Jordan, the community empowerment initiative assisted three Palestinian communities in Amman and Aqaba Governorates, totalling about 40,000 people, with the establishment of sustainable systems for local development, which implemented projects for youth-to-youth education, better parenting, health education and community-based rehabilitation for the disabled.

17. In Hebron, the programme assisted the Ministry of Education and Higher Education with the development of community-based distance learning. In 2001-2002, the programme covered 12,000 children whose schooling had been interrupted by closures and curfews, ensuring that they maintained educational standards. The Hebron experience was replicated in 67 schools in 12 districts, allowing 14,000 children to learn from home and providing about 25,000 primary-school children in 124 summer schools with opportunities to catch up on missed classes during 2002 and 2003. The programme also supported campaigns aimed at ensuring that all children would be back in school by the beginning of the school year and remain in school throughout the year.

18. The programme assisted in ensuring that summer camps for children would be managed as places of peaceful development for them, and provided financial and material support to 75 camps in which about 13,500 adolescents enrolled. Summer camp facilitators received training with a particular emphasis on active participation, freedom of expression, development and psychosocial support of children. UNICEF provided support to monitor implementation of activities in these camps.

Lessons learned

19. The 2001-2003 programme of cooperation brought to light many similarities in the programmes for Palestinian children and women living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Further convergence of interventions will result in a more streamlined programme.

20. Adaptability has been key in maintaining effective programmes. Mobility restrictions and concerns about staff security limited the possibilities of programme implementation for both UNICEF and its partners. The programme has also addressed the challenge of finding an appropriate balance between short-term emergency interventions and longer-term development objectives.

21. The lack of accurate data became more apparent over the period 2001-2003. There is scope to improve the quality and timeliness of existing data-collection

mechanisms by the international community, the Palestinian Authority and the Governments of Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic with regard to the situation of Palestinian children. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics can play an important role in such efforts, as it covers all four areas.

22. The Hebron distance learning initiative proved successful, largely because local educators were empowered to work on their own, relying on external technical and financial support only when needed. Self-help and decentralized efforts with a high degree of community involvement show great promise, not only in the context of political conflict and violence but also as a long-term strategy for providing services under normal circumstances. In Jordan, the mobilization of local authorities for various interventions illustrated similar success in community empowerment, which should be expanded in the future with a special focus on women and youth.

23. Projects in which adolescents act as "service providers", such as peer education and psychosocial counselling, have proven successful. Through "learning by doing", adolescents can contribute positively, not only to their peers, but to the larger community. When adolescents are given the chance to learn, analyse, be creative, self-reliant and responsible, they can have enormous impact. However, to ensure an environment conducive to their participation in decision-making, officials, local communities and parents must be made aware of the positive impact of adolescents' participation and its modalities.

The programme of cooperation, 2004-2005

Summary budget table[a]

(In thousands of United States dollars)

Programme	*Regular resources*	*Other resources*	*Total*
Promoting and monitoring children's and women's rights	880	2 250	3 130
Early childhood care for survival, growth and development	1 020	3 120	4 140
Promoting learning in "child-friendly" environments	440	2 300	2 740
Development and participation of adolescents	240	1 460	1 700
Cross-sectoral costs	620	100	720
Total	3 200	9 230	12 430

[a] These figures do not include resources that might be received through emergency appeals, which in the case of the Occupied Palestinian Territory amounted to about $2.5 million in 2002. The UNICEF portion of the 2003 United Nations Humanitarian Plan of Action for the Occupied Palestinian Territory includes an appeal for $16.2 million.

Preparation process

24. Against a background of continued volatility in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the region at large, UNICEF agreed with its partners that it would be preferable to develop a two-year programme of cooperation, instead of the usual

five-year programme. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Palestinian Authority, with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in the lead, has managed the preparation of the 2004-2005 programme in a very proactive manner, reflecting its strong feeling of ownership and commitment to children and women. The process was participatory and based on experiences from the 2001-2003 programme as articulated in annual review meetings. Technical working meetings feeding in to the strategy paper covered all four programmatic areas and involved line ministries, NGOs, media and other United Nations agencies. Two working meetings were held with adolescents, one in Ramallah and one in Gaza City, to identify problem areas as perceived by adolescents and their expectations of the programme. A strategy meeting held jointly in Ramallah and Gaza City through a video link gathered more than 100 participants and provided useful recommendations. In Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, similar participatory processes took place, building on annual reviews and involving a number of partners, with UNRWA playing a key role.

Goals, key results and strategies

25. The overall goal of the programme of cooperation will be the realization of the rights of Palestinian children and women, including their rights to survival, development, protection and participation.

26. The area programme, which targets vulnerable Palestinian children and women in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, is framed by common strategies and managed in close coordination between the partners in the four locations. The shared strategic framework is based on similarities between the situation of the Palestinian populations in the four locations, as well as the results of past UNICEF cooperation. Specific local conditions will give final shape to UNICEF cooperation in each of the four locations.

27. The expected key results of the programme of cooperation will be:

(a) The establishment of a set of core indicators to document and analyse the impact of violations of children's and women's rights;

(b) Establishment of "child-friendly" environments in disadvantaged areas;

(c) Increased and sustained immunization coverage rates above 90 per cent for the six diseases targeted by the EPI;

(d) Universal availability of iodized salt;

(e) Adoption of national policies setting standards for the establishment and licensing of pre-school establishments;

(f) Increased access to quality early childhood care;

(g) Access to remedial education for all primary-school-aged children;

(h) Introduction of life-skills-based education in the curriculum for grades 4-6 and 10-11, including vocational schools;

(i) Adoption of official policies for adolescents;

(j) Improved attitudes and behaviour vis-à-vis adolescents;

(k) Improved opportunities for adolescent participation.

28. The programme of cooperation uses a life-cycle approach and will give priority to critical interventions along the three major developmental stages of childhood — early childhood, middle childhood and adolescence. A rights-based approach to programming will be pursued and strengthened, contributing to the sustainability of achievements for children. The Convention on the Rights of the Child will guide cross-sectoral programming in all four programmes, centred on the child. Advocacy, based on that Convention and on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, international humanitarian law and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, will be a cornerstone in support of the programme and agendas for action.

29. Monitoring mechanisms will be strengthened, with special attention to be given to underlying causes of the current crisis and data that highlight its impact on the rights of children and women.

30. Preparedness for rapid emergency response has been built into the programme. At the same time, the programme is dedicated to a long-term developmental perspective. Annual United Nations common humanitarian action plans will ensure complementarity and coordination with partner United Nations agencies when responding to emergency needs.

31. Building on lessons learned during the previous programme, innovative approaches which strengthen local capacities will be employed whenever possible, including during emergency response. With this approach, impact, ownership and sustainability can be maximized. The programme will give priority to interventions that have an impact on a larger scale. Underserved areas and groups which are particularly vulnerable will be identified and targeted through rapid assessments and surveys. Adolescents will be approached as potential service providers, participants and contributors to community development, programme planning, implementation and monitoring.

Relationship to national priorities and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework

32. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the programme is built around objectives and strategies formulated in such existing national plans as the Five-year Educational Development Plan and the National Strategic Health Plan, and follows the direction spelled out in the latest National Plan of Action for Palestinian Children. The programme has also taken into account adjustments made to these plans as a consequence of the current crisis. As a follow-up to the General Assembly's Special Session on Children, the Palestinian Authority will develop and implement a new seven-year National Plan of Action. The promulgation of the Palestinian Child Rights Law and the development of a national policy for adolescents will further guide the implementation of the programme. The programme reflects the Palestinian Authority's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals and the goals of *A World Fit for Children*.

33. In the absence of a Common County Assessment (CCA) or United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, coordination and consistency of outcomes, strategies and actions with

those of other United Nations agencies will be ensured through the Local Aid Coordination Committee, chaired by the United Nations Special Coordinator Office and through United Nations humanitarian action plans. In Lebanon, the Palestinian refugees are not included in the UNDAF process. In Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, the programme components for Palestinian children and women correspond to the priorities set out in the respective CCAs and UNDAFs. In all four locations, UNICEF interventions are also closely linked to and coordinated with the priorities of UNRWA.

Relationship to international priorities

34. The proposed programme will contribute to the Millennium Development Goals of protecting the vulnerable, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women and combating HIV/AIDS. It also addresses the priorities of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan, with a particular focus on immunization and improved protection of children from violence. Integrated early childhood development (IECD) will be promoted through both improvement of services and behavioural change of caregivers. Girls' education will be addressed through remedial and life-skills education, and back-to-school campaigns. Fighting HIV/AIDS is a priority, and activity will focus on awareness-raising among adolescents. The programme's emergency interventions will respond to the UNICEF core corporate commitments in the areas of health and nutrition, education and child protection (including psychosocial support). The programme will also contribute to the four major goals of A World Fit for Children for protecting against abuse, exploitation and violence, promoting healthy lives, providing quality education and combating HIV/AIDS.

Programme components

Promoting and monitoring children's and women's rights

35. The three projects of this cross-cutting programme address the weak monitoring system and knowledge base for issues pertaining to children's rights; violations of children's rights; and the challenges of ensuring effective advocacy, policy development and programme implementation. The programme will assist in achieving the following results: (a) a strengthened knowledge base on children and its maximal utilization for advocacy, national plans and programme interventions; (b) increased commitment and strengthened capacity of partners — including civil society — to identify, address and monitor violation of children's rights to protection; and (c) improved national policy development in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and stronger advocacy for its implementation at national and community levels.

36. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the ***planning, monitoring and evaluation*** project will support the dissemination, monitoring and implementation of the Palestinian Child Rights Law, which is based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A set of core indicators to document and analyse the impact of rights violations will be established, and support will be given to the development of a national monitoring system consisting of a more comprehensive data set, including

gender- and geographically-disaggregated information. The UNICEF contribution will include technical assistance, training and capacity-building. The "child-friendly" city initiative, developed in four cities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, will assist disadvantaged urban communities in creating environments that are conducive to children's development and participation. The planning phase will consist of needs assessments at the community level, followed by improvement of services and other facilities for children. In Jordan and Lebanon, a gender- and geographically-disaggregated system for monitoring the rights of Palestinian children will be supported. In the Syrian Arab Republic, support will be extended for the establishment and operation of a "ChildInfo" unit, drawing on the research capacity of local universities. To facilitate planning for "healthy camps", the Syrian Ministry of Health will conduct family and health surveys in prospective camps.

37. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the ***child protection*** project will assist in building knowledge and capacities among government institutions, NGOs and caregivers to address the rights of children affected by the armed conflict, including child detainees. Psychosocial support to these children will be an essential component. The project will also strengthen capacities to assess, analyse and respond to other specific violations of child rights, including domestic and other forms of violence, working children and other children at risk. UNICEF support will include technical support and training of teachers, parents and policy makers. In Jordan, community approaches will increase access to services for detection of abuse followed by referral for counselling and rehabilitation. In Lebanon, the project will focus on improving and increasing access to services and information for the most vulnerable children, such as abused, working and disabled children and those in conflict with the law.

38. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the ***advocacy for children's and women's rights*** project will raise public awareness of the situation of Palestinian children and women; promote "child-friendly" legislation and the mobilization of resources; and advocate for all parties to adhere to the relevant international Conventions. As a follow-up to the Special Session on Children, UNICEF support to the development and implementation of a seven-year National Plan of Action will include technical and financial assistance, capacity-building of media and child-rights institutions, coordination activities, strengthening of existing media programmes for and by children, and training of key officials in promoting rights issues in the media. In Lebanon, advocacy will centre on the social and economic self-reliance of Palestinian women.

Early childhood care for survival, growth and development

39. This programme, consisting of two projects, targets children 0-6 years of age (including the perinatal period) and addresses the need to maintain and improve basic services and care for health, adequate growth and development. The programme will contribute to: (a) reducing infant, under-five and maternal mortality rates to 2000 levels in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to reducing them by 5 per cent from 2000 levels among Palestinian children and women living in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic; (b) maintenance of national polio-free and neonatal-tetanus-free status; (c) a 50-per-cent increase in exclusive breastfeeding rates up to 6 months of age over 2000 levels; (d) the elimination of iodine deficiency disorders; (e) a 50-per-cent reduction in anaemia prevalence levels for children

under five years of age, as registered in the national nutrition survey undertaken in 2002; and (f) behavioural change among caregivers for better child-care practices.

40. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the ***maternal and child health (MCH) services and policies*** project will maintain immunization coverage rates against the six diseases of the EPI above 90 percent in all districts, increase access to the integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI), particularly in underserved areas, and ensure availability of iron-fortified flour and iodized salt. A psychosocial component will be included in IMCI. Support will be given to supplementary immunization campaigns, monitoring of national immunization coverage, development of policies promoting exclusive breastfeeding, flour fortification and salt iodation, and research on the nutritional status of children and mothers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. MCH centres and/or village health rooms in underserved areas will be upgraded with basic equipment and training of staff. The role of community health workers will be strengthened and their geographic coverage increased. The results of the 2002 nutrition survey will guide the selection of geographic areas for interventions to improve nutritional status and reduce anaemia. The UNICEF contribution will include awareness-raising campaigns, technical assistance training, capacity-building, logistics, supplies, equipment and financial support. In Jordan and Lebanon, UNICEF will continue to support UNRWA in improving the quality of health services for Palestinian children, including access to IMCI services. In the Syrian Arab Republic, support will continue for the sickle-cell anaemia abatement project that is being carried out in six Palestinian camps.

41. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the ***early childhood care for development*** project will increase access to quality early childhood care. The project will support the development and implementation of a national policy that sets standards for the establishment and licensing of pre-schools. The capacities of kindergarten teachers and nursery caretakers will be enhanced through a training programme which will include a psychosocial component. Selected kindergartens and nurseries in underserved areas will be upgraded. Parents and caregivers will be imparted with better knowledge on good child-care practices. In three target areas in Jordan, the project will increase access to IECD services and increase the number of caregivers who have knowledge of at least 75 per cent of key IECD messages. In Lebanon, the project will support existing Palestinian pre-school services and improving parents' care practices. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the "healthy camp" initiative will promote better parenting together with improved services in kindergartens and access to safe playgrounds. All better parenting interventions will include prevention of abuse and other forms of violence against children.

Promoting learning in "child-friendly" environments

42. This programme, which has two projects, targets children 6-12 years of age and addresses the problems of access and quality in primary education. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, where closures and curfews are negatively affecting school enrolment, the programme will contribute to: (a) increasing to 98 per cent the net enrolment rate for grades 1-6 by the end of 2005, with a special focus on gender, geographical equity and children with special needs; (b) increasing the proportion of children with achievement scores of 80/100 in literacy and numeracy in grade 4 from 35 to at least 50 per cent by the end of 2005; and (c) increasing the

proportion of children in grade 4 with knowledge of life skills by 50 per cent, from a baseline to be established by the 2003 youth survey.

43. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the ***education for all*** project will assist in increasing access to remedial education for primary-school-aged children. A study will assess remedial educational activities and learning achievements. UNICEF support will include the development and production of "self-learning" worksheets and manuals for teachers and parents, teacher training, supplies for after-school activities and remedial activities during summer vacation. Through "back-to-school" campaigns, the project will ensure that all primary-school-aged children return to school at the beginning of the school year and remain in school. UNICEF will provide essential supplies to selected schools and students and support awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of education and schools as safe havens. In Lebanon, the project will support remedial education in UNRWA schools for children whose performance is below standard.

44. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the ***education for life*** project will address issues of quality of education and violence in schools, making schools better places for learning, especially for girls. Life-skills-based education, including psychosocial and conflict resolution components, will be introduced in the national curriculum for grades 4-6, thus completing this curriculum in primary schools. UNICEF will support the training of 2,500 teachers and provide educational materials. The project will also promote "child-friendly" schools, initially through a national survey to be carried out in 2003. UNICEF will then support a broad alliance for implementing the initiative on a national scale. Other UNICEF inputs will include training of trainers and teachers; support to 30 new "child-friendly" schools per year, primarily in at-risk areas; and support to awareness-raising campaigns. In the Syrian Arab Republic, as part of the promotion of an overall "child-friendly" environment for Palestinian children, the "child-friendly" approach will be applied to UNRWA-run schools, where reduction in drop-out rates is an important objective.

Development and participation of adolescents

45. Through two projects targeting children 12-18 years of age, the programme aims to address adolescents' lack of necessary life skills and their lack of opportunities to participate in community development, influence decisions and provide services. The programme will contribute to increased adolescent participation in the community and to behavioural change for healthier life styles, both psychosocially and physically, including HIV/AIDS prevention.

46. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the ***society for adolescents*** project will improve the enabling environment for adolescents through advocacy and implementation of the national policy for adolescents. Based on the 2003 national youth survey, the project will identify new policy and advocacy needs and actions in such areas as psychosocial support, domestic and other forms of violence, legal protection, HIV/AIDS, adolescent marriages and other issues concerning adolescent girls. To improve attitudes and behaviour vis-à-vis adolescents, television and other media will be used to create a better understanding of their rights and needs among parents, teachers and decision makers. Opportunities will be created for adolescents to influence decisions, provide services in community development, and plan and lead small-scale projects. UNICEF will support children's municipal councils and parliaments, youth clubs and similar forums with provision of supplies, technical

assistance, coordination and capacity-building. In Lebanon, the project will utilize similar components promoting adolescents' active participation in the life of the camps.

47. The ***skills for life*** project will introduce life-skills-based education, including psychosocial health, conflict resolution and protection from violence, in the national curriculum for grades 10-11 and for vocational schools, thus completing this curriculum in secondary schools. UNICEF support will include training of curriculum developers, trainers and 1,500 teachers, in addition to providing teachers' manuals and guides. Life skills will also be introduced in summer camps and youth clubs. UNICEF will support training of summer camp volunteers and monitors and the organization of 60 two-week summer camps per year, benefiting 10,000 adolescents. In Jordan, working with UNRWA schools and community centres in selected areas, the project will increase the percentage of adolescents having knowledge of a minimum of 10 key areas of basic life skills and healthy lifestyles. In Lebanon, the project will focus on the development of marketable skills for adolescents in refugee camps. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the project will focus on HIV/AIDS prevention, among other issues.

Cross-sectoral costs

48. The cross-sectoral costs will be used almost exclusively to cover staff costs, including two international Professional project officers. The funds will also cover various consultants and temporary fixed-term staff, thus allowing the flexibility required to respond to the volatile situation. Additional staff may be employed using donor contributions to the United Nations Humanitarian Action Plan and other sources of emergency income.

Major partnerships

49. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the programme will be implemented through cooperation between the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and UNICEF. Line ministries will be the main partners in planning and implementing projects. UNICEF will continue to work with community-based organizations and Palestinian and international NGOs.

50. In Jordan, the programme will be implemented in partnership with the Department of Palestinian Affairs and the Ministries of Health and Education, with local communities responsible for implementing various components. In Lebanon, the General Union of Palestinian Women, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society and camp committees will be implementing partners. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the General Authority for Palestinian Arab Refugees will remain the main partner, through which other partners, including Palestinian NGOs, will implement activities.

51. Throughout the area, UNRWA will remain the major partner of UNICEF within the United Nations system, and other strong partnerships exist with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Special Coordinator Office, the World Bank and the World Health Organization.

Monitoring, evaluation and programme management

52. Objectives and indicators have been formulated for all four populations and will be the basis for the integrated monitoring and evaluation plans. These plans will identify research, studies, surveys and evaluations to be undertaken by the programme, which will also work to strengthen the national monitoring systems that will integrate these indicators.

53. Two-year master plans of operations and annual project plans of action will be agreed upon by UNICEF and its partners in the four locations. These plans may be revised in the light of changes in funding or priority needs. Project plans of action will be developed together with relevant line ministries and partners based on the objectives of the programme of cooperation and on recommendations from annual reviews. Because this is a two-year programme, the first annual review, scheduled for the end of 2004, will serve as a mid-term review and provide essential inputs for the development of the next programme of cooperation.

54. The continuing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory requires that UNICEF strengthen its capacity to manage the increased programme throughput. At the Jerusalem office, new international Professional posts will be established for programme management and coordination, operations and communication, plus additional mid-level positions in the areas of programming and operations. No changes are envisaged in the management structures for the Palestinian programmes managed by the country offices in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, except for the addition of a national Professional post in the latter office.